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Identical letters dated 12 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to transmit the following information.

On the evening of Wednesday 10 June 2015, terrorists of the Nusrah Front and the Ahrar al-Sham movement committed a horrific massacre in the village of Qalb Lawzah, in the Idlib countryside. Members of the two *takfirist* terrorist organizations, which are connected with the Saudi and Erdoğan regimes, slaughtered dozens of civilians, including religious figures and children, and burned down dozens of homes. The Syrian Government will provide the Security Council and the United Nations Secretariat with information concerning the innocent civilian victims.

This latest massacre, in the peaceful village of Qalb Lawzah, is the latest in a series of systematic, barbaric acts of terrorism against the Syrian people in all its components. The targets are spread across the map of Syria, from Aleppo in the north to Busra al-Sham in the south. They have included Ishtabraq in the Idlib countryside; Mab'ujah in the Hama countryside; Tadmur (Palmyra) in Homs governorate; Adra al-'Ummaliyah and Ma'lula in Rif Dimashq governorate; and numerous other Syrian towns and villages. Those crimes against humanity are the work of armed terrorist groups that share an obscurantist ideology based on the rejection of others, whoever those others may be. They are a response to foreign schemes intended to sow division, dissension, spite, extremism, zealotry and hatred among the united people of Syria. My Government reiterates that such despicable terrorist crimes against humanity could not have taken place if the regimes of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Israel, Jordan and Turkey had not continued to provide the armed terrorist groups with weapons, funds, equipment, shelter and training. Such conduct is a bare-faced standing violation of United Nations resolutions, particularly the counter-terrorism resolutions of the Security Council. On behalf of its people and everyone who fights against terrorism, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic

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emphasizes that the picture in Syria and the region as a whole has become more than clear. World States and international organizations have only two options. They can take a stand with Syria and its people and leadership as they struggle against terrorism and, in so doing, demonstrate a genuine commitment to combating and eradicating terrorism; or they can side with the terrorists and continue to sponsor terrorism, in which case they must take responsibility for their choice before their own peoples and global public opinion.

In that connection, it is worrying that certain States persist in advancing their own narrow, short-sighted agendas by describing the terrorist organizations as armed moderate opposition groups, in a futile attempt to bestow legitimacy on gangs whose stock in trade is slaughter, cannibalism and wreaking destruction and desolation wherever they go. The purpose of that course of action is to have the groups removed from the Security Council counter-terrorism lists. It is surprising that certain members of the Security Council remain silent regarding the terrorist crimes that are being committed in Syria, crimes that world States and the international community all agree should be denounced.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic is determined to persist in combating terrorism and fulfilling its patriotic duty to defend and protect the Syrian people. Once again, it calls on the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to condemn this criminal act. The Security Council must assume its responsibility by enforcing its counter-terrorism resolutions, particularly resolution 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015), and by taking immediate action to curb the regimes that are supporting the armed terrorist groups.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 107, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative